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LEARNING FROM eKASI: LESSONS DERIVED FROM GUGA S'THEBE AND VPUU IN SOUTH AFRICA TO INFORM FUTURE PID INTERVENTIONS

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that the mini-dissertation,**LEARNING FROM eKASI: LESSONS DERIVED FROM GUGA S'THEBE AND VPUU IN SOUTH AFRICA TO INFORM FUTURE PID INTERVENTIONS** which has been submitted in fulfilment of part of the requirements for the module of **DIT 810:Design Investigative Treatise** , at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for any degree at the University of Pretoria or any other tertiary institution.

I declare that I obtained the applicable research ethics approval in order to conduct the research that has been described in this dissertation.

I declare that I have observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's ethical code for researchers and have followed the policy guidelines for responsible research.

Signature:

Date: …26/07/2023……………………………

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This research investigates the experiences of two prominent South African initiatives, Guga S'Thebe and Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU), to extract key lessons for future Public Interest Design (PID) interventions in similar contexts. Through analysis, this study contributes to effective approaches for marginalised communities, especially in townships.

Guga S'Thebe, located in Langa township near Cape Town, is a PID-focused cultural centre promoting arts, skills development, and community engagement. VPUU is a comprehensive urban upgrading program enhancing safety and inclusivity in violence-prone Cape Town areas. Both have improved living standards and social cohesion.

This qualitative research employs semi-structured interviews, participant observations, desktop studies, social media reviews, and document analysis. Stakeholders, including community members, spatial agents, and project managers, provide insights into processes, challenges, and lessons from Guga S'Thebe and VPUU.

The deductive thematic data analysis uses Kim's PID conceptual taxonomy to categorise literature and findings into nine guiding themes for PID best practices.

Preliminary findings highlight the importance of a participatory approach, fostering community ownership and sustainability. Involving residents in decision-making empowers them, increasing engagement.

Strong partnerships and collaborations with local governments, NGOs, and international institutions have expanded interventions and facilitated knowledge sharing.

A multidisciplinary approach recognizes the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental factors, resulting in multifunctional spaces, essential services, and economic opportunities.

Ownership is crucial in PID, empowering communities and ensuring long-term sustainability. Active community participation leads to more impactful design interventions.

These findings offer valuable insights and recommendations for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers in PID and sustainable community development in township environments.

Keywords

Introduction

The discourse of Public Interest Design(PID) has gained momentum over the past twenty five years in South Africa as a means to redress the legacy of apartheid in our spaces. PID has emerged as a crucial tool that seeks to address social, economic, and environmental challenges through design interventions that prioritise the needs and aspirations of marginalised communities (Young 2018).

PID is a human-centred approach to the design of products, environments, and systems, expanding the disciplinary boundaries, professional practices, and relevance of architecture and other design disciplines in the twenty-first century (Anderson 2014:1).

PID goes beyond traditional notions of design and architecture, extending its range to include urban planning, community development, and social justice (Kim in Karim 2018). Nadia Anderson (2014:16) argues that PID *shifts architectural agency from service to the private to engagement with a broad range of stakeholders to proactively address contemporary issues that affect our societies on a daily basis*. PID's core objective is to bring a paradigm shift towards the traditional means of design which is a more product focused approach towards a more people centred approach, addressing the pressing needs of marginalised communities by fostering collaborative processes, community empowerment and bettering their quality of life.

Central to this research is the theoretical framework of PID taxonomy, which provides a comprehensive classification system for understanding and evaluating design interventions aimed at addressing social, economic and environmental challenges. The PID taxonomy developed by Joonsung Kim (in Karim 2018) provides a valuable framework for classifying and analysing PID efforts based on their goals, strategies and outcomes .

By applying this taxonomy the study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of Guga S'Thebe and VPUU initiatives within the framework of PID. The taxonomy allows for a systematic examination of the objectives, strategies, and outcomes of these initiatives, enabling the identification of lessons and best practices associated with each category. This approach enhances our understanding of how PID interventions can effectively address multifaceted challenges in similar contexts, guiding future design interventions towards more impactful and sustainable outcomes.

In South Africa, where the legacy of apartheid has left a profound impact on spatial segregation, inadequate housing, and social inequality, the principles of PID have gained significant relevance (Altman & Stigter 2015). The country's transition to democracy in 1994 brought renewed focus on redressing historical injustices and fostering social cohesion. *South Africa is said to be the most unequal country on the planet according to some measures, with many people still living in areas based on their ethnicity, as was the case before democracy'* (Hänel, 2019:2)

Ekasi is colloquial term which refers to a township,Richard Bowker(2020) states In the Nguni languages, "ekasi" means in, from, or to the township. In contemporary use, it has both this

sense and that of merely the noun, kasi . By using this term we tap into an embodied culture and history which can be related in a spatial sense.

Central to this research is the theoretical framework of PID taxonomy, which provides a comprehensive classification system for understanding and evaluating design interventions aimed at addressing social, economic and environmental challenges. The PID taxonomy developed by Joonsung Kim (in Karim 2018) provides a valuable framework for classifying and analysing PID efforts based on their goals, strategies and outcomes .

Charman, Petersen and Anderson (2018) argue that townships operate very differently to other urban areas in a South African context. Due to their monofunctional dormitory nature, lack of resources and services has the mindscape and practices of the communities. The experiences of Guga S'Thebe and VPUU initiatives can offer valuable insights into the application of PID principles in addressing these challenges and can provide guidance for future interventions as both originated from such township settings.

The selection of Guga S'Thebe and Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) as case studies in this research is driven by their significance and relevance in the field of PID. Both initiatives offer valuable insights and best practices that can inform future PID projects in similar contexts. In addition, Gugu S'Thebe is situated in Langa and the VPUU projects are found in Khayelitsha which are townships on the periphery of the city of Cape Town , hence they share a similar historical context.

Guga S'Thebe: Empowering Communities through Cultural Spaces

Guga S'Thebe, located in Langa, Cape Town, serves as a cultural hub and community centre that embodies the principles of PID. Aiming to promote creative expression, skill development, and community engagement, it was founded in the early 2000s (CS Studio 2014). This initiative allows artists, artisans, and performers to showcase their work and contribute to the vitality of the community. Guga S'Thebe has successfully transformed a previously underutilised space into a vibrant hub that fosters social cohesion and provides opportunities for economic empowerment.

The lessons derived from the Guga S'Thebe initiative can inform future PID interventions in similar contexts. One key lesson is the importance of community participation and ownership in the design and management of cultural spaces. The involvement of community members in decision-making processes empowers them and ensures that the spaces reflect their aspirations and cultural identities (Davis 2016). Additionally, Guga S'Thebe has demonstrated the value of nurturing local talent and providing platforms for artists and artisans to showcase their work, contributing to the economic development of the community.

VPUU: Creating Safe and Inclusive Neighbourhoods

Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) is a comprehensive urban upgrading program that focuses on creating safe and inclusive neighbourhoods in violence-prone areas across South Africa (VPUU 2023). The initiative integrates various interventions, including improved physical infrastructure, community engagement, and social programs, to address

the underlying causes of violence and social exclusion. By creating safer and more accessible public spaces, providing social support services, and fostering community participation, VPUU aims to transform communities and reduce crime rates (VPUU 2017).

The experiences of VPUU offer valuable insights into the design and implementation of PID interventions in similar contexts. Key lessons that are found as relevant in the discourse include the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration in addressing complex social issues. VPUU brings together professionals from diverse fields such as architecture, urban planning, social work, and community development to design holistic interventions that address the interconnected challenges faced by communities (Caplan 2019). The integration of physical, social, and economic interventions has proven effective in creating safer and more inclusive neighbourhoods (VPUU 2017).

Using lessons and best practices from both Guga S'Thebe and VPUU, future PID interventions can be tailored to the specific needs of different townships in different parts of the country. It is possible to apply these lessons to the design and implementation of interventions to address marginalised communities' context-specific challenges.

Literature regarding PID has identified the significance role of participatory approaches in PID interventions. Participatory approaches foster community ownership, empowerment, and sustainable outcomes (Davis 2016, Awan , Schneider & Till 2011). Guga S'Thebe and VPUU have recognized the importance of involving community members in decision-making processes, resulting in increased engagement and commitment from residents. This research will explore how these initiatives have successfully implemented participatory practices and examine their implications for future PID interventions.

The importance of strong partnerships and collaborations in PID interventions has been widely acknowledged. Collaboration with local governments, NGOs, and private sector entities enables access to resources, expertise, and funding (Caplan 2019, Salama & Schneekloth 2009). Effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are critical for ensuring accountability and learning from experiences in PID interventions (Altman & Stigter 2015, Wiseman 2016).

The participatory approach, strong partnerships, multidisciplinary collaboration, and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms observed in these initiatives can provide valuable insights and recommendations for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers working towards sustainable community development.

Public Interest Design (PID) is a potent approach for architects and designers to apply their expertise to tackle social issues and improve the public good (Caplan 2019). In South Africa, there's a rising enthusiasm for PID, with designers and architects actively addressing socioeconomic concerns such as housing, healthcare, and education (Anderson 2014).

To understanding the lesson and best practices for a PID project, we will draw upon the work of Andrew Charman, Leif Petersen, and Thireshen Govender (2018) in *Township Economy: Spaces, People, and Practices* and the book *CS Studio Architects, Carin Smuts, Urs Schmid: Anatomy of a Dream*(Frey 2016) long side Kim's PID Taxonomy(in Karim 2018) and

Awan , Schneider, Till (2011) *Spatial agency: Other ways of Architecture* as our theoretical framing for the research as we explore the PID in the South Africa context.

We shall be conducting a scoping literature review to assess the extent of research evidence on the research topic and identity gaps in the literature which will lead our overall research in deriving the best practices for a PID project in future.

The research falls under the growing discourse of PID in the South African context which proposes the documentation of selected architectural interventions in South Africa since 1994 that represent a paradigm shift towards PID, thereby establishing a database for further research and documentation. In reference to Kim's (in Karim 2018) conceptual taxonomy, nine categories are proposed that will provide the analytical framework of the work identified (Combrinck 2022).

Through that lens we identify the research question: What lessons and best practices can be derived from the experiences of Guga S'Thebe and VPUU initiatives in South Africa to inform future PID interventions in similar contexts?

Literature review

Introduction

PID is critical in the post-apartheid South African context because it seeks to address the legacy of apartheid, which created segregated and unequal spaces that perpetuated social, economic, and spatial injustices. The growing discourse of PID aims for people who live in marginalised or underserved areas to be able to enhance their quality of life by creating spaces that promote social cohesion, economic development, and improve their quality of life (Feldman 2013) .

According to Olatunji and Harris (2019), PID has gained momentum in South Africa since the mid-2000s, with several initiatives that aim to empower communities to participate in the design and development of their townships. These initiatives include the Informal Settlement Network (ISN), which works with informal settlement residents to improve their living conditions through upgrading, and the Design Studio, a collaboration between the University of Cape Town and the City of Cape Town, which seeks to promote participatory design in low-income housing (Olatunji and Harris 2019).

In post-apartheid South Africa, PID has become an essential tool to promote equity, social inclusion, and sustainability, particularly in historically marginalised and disadvantaged communities (Young 2018). PID is unique in every context as the needs of those affected are very different, hence it is important to understand how PID would operate in a South African township setting and develop the best lessons and practices to tackle its unique challenges.

PID in a global sense, is growing in speaking out on condemning injustice both spatial and socio-economically in terms of spaces that are democratic and enable empathy (Baldwin 2020).

This literature review is guided by a theoretical framework of PID , which advocates for a collaborative and participatory approach to design, with the aim of addressing social and environmental issues. PID recognizes the power of design to positively impact communities, and emphasises the importance of engagement with local stakeholders throughout the design process (Awan, Schneider, and Till 2011). Within the realm of PID, various frameworks and taxonomies have been developed to guide designers and researchers in understanding and implementing socially engaged design interventions.

The Public Interest Design (PID) taxonomy developed by Joonsung Kim (Karim 2018) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the diverse dimensions of design practices that prioritise social impact and community engagement. This section will discuss each of the nine themes within the taxonomy, drawing insights from relevant literature.

Design for Political activism, Advocacy Design and Social Construction
Design for political activism is defined by Kim (in Karim 2018) as initiatives driven by a specific social or political agenda, seeking to challenge existing systems and promote social change. In this context, design becomes a tool for political engagement and resistance, aiming to raise awareness, foster critical thinking, and mobilise individuals and communities towards collective action.

This shares a similar definition with advocacy design. Kim (in Karim 2018) states it focuses on using design as a tool to advocate for social change, raise awareness about critical issues, and mobilise support for specific causes. Through visual campaigns, artefacts, and experiences, advocacy design seeks to inspire action and promote social justice.

Kim (in Karim 2018) defines social construction as the process of creating meaning, identities, and values through design interventions. It recognizes that design is not neutral but influences social dynamics and shapes cultural narratives. Designers practising social construction critically examine the power dynamics embedded in design decisions and strive to challenge and transform social norms, biases, and inequalities (Karim, 2018).

Awan, Schneider, and Till (2011)and CS studio architects (Frey 2016) refer to design as an active engagement with social and political issues, challenging the status quo and advocating for change. Designers can employ their creative skills to craft messages, design artefacts, and create experiences that foster empathy, inspire action, and promote social justice.

Arnstein (1969) supports this approach in her ladder of participation stating that by understanding where the community sits on the ladder it helps eliminate power imbalances and inequalities by shifting the focus from symbolic participation to higher levels of civic control and power. This supports the principles of social equity and social construction themes that underlie many PID initiatives .

Township Economy (Charmans, Petersen and Govender 2018) refers to the informal economic activities and enterprises that thrive within historically marginalised urban settlements, known as townships. These economies often emerge as a response to limited

formal job opportunities and socioeconomic disparities. This view aligns with the activist category in Joonsung Kim's PID taxonomy (Karim 2018).

The emphasised importance of local entrepreneurship, community empowerment, and economic resilience within marginalised contexts

Cultural preservation and *Design for Political Activism* is one and the same coin in the South African context as we see authors like Webster Ball (2013) reflect on how identity and politics are linked and play a crucial role in maintaining the distinct identities and heritage of marginalised communities within townships. They also emphasise the importance of safeguarding cultural practices, traditions, and built environments to ensure the continuity and vitality of cultural identity.

Pro Bono Design Services
Pro Bono Design Services involve the provision of design expertise and services without charge, primarily to underserved communities and non-profit organisations. This approach aims to address social inequities by providing design solutions to those who cannot afford professional services. Pro bono design services align with the collaborative category in Kim's (in Karim 2018) taxonomy. Designers offering pro bono services contribute their skills, knowledge, and resources to empower communities and create positive social impact (Karim 2018).

Architect - Facilitator
Kim(in Karim 2018) refers to the role of architects as facilitators and enablers of community-driven design processes. Rather than imposing their own visions, architect-facilitators work closely with communities to support their aspirations and provide technical guidance. This theme aligns with the collaborative category in Kim's taxonomy. Architect-facilitators act as mediators, bridging the gap between technical expertise and community needs, ensuring that design solutions are responsive to local contexts (Karim 2018).

As facilitators, architects move from traditional top-down approaches to more democratic and inclusive decision-making processes. Instead of imposing their design vision on the community, architects are actively listening and committed to understanding the unique backgrounds, needs and challenges of the people they serve (Awan, Schneider and Till, 2011). Awan , Schneider and Till (2011) believe that this approach empowers communities by giving them a sense of ownership and ownership over the built environment they live in.

Open- source Design
Open-source design emphasises the principles of collaboration, sharing, and transparency in design processes and outcomes. It encourages the open exchange of knowledge, ideas, and design resources, allowing for broader participation and collective problem-solving. Open-source design aligns with the collaborative category in Kim's taxonomy(in Karim 2018). Through open-source platforms, designers can collaborate with communities, experts, and other stakeholders to co-create solutions that address social and environmental challenges (Karim, 2018).

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs

Understanding the narrative of this report , one needs to understand how we define and categorise human needs. There are many philosophies that consider human needs, one such is Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs .

Maslow's (1943) *Hierarchy of Needs* is a theory that is widely accepted in the field of psychology and has implications for PID interventions. According to Maslow (1943), individuals have a hierarchy of needs that must be met in a specific order, from basic physiological needs to higher needs such as self-actualization. Applying this framework to a PID project helps designers and practitioners holistically understand and address the diverse needs of marginalised communities.

The township economy plays an important role in the lives of those who live in townships, and understanding its dynamics through the lens of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs is invaluable for addressing the challenges these communities face can provide insight.

Marais (2018) and Fiksel (2019:23) argue that at the base level of Maslow's hierarchy, the township economy deals with the physiological needs of individuals and these needs include access to basic amenities such as clean water, adequate housing and reliable infrastructure. The provision of these necessities is essential for the well-being and health of townspeople . But what is seen in Charmans, Petersen & Goverender (2018) writings is that many of the townships in the South Africa context lack the basic services and basic needs for them to even appreciate design.

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy concerns safety needs such as personal safety, employment opportunities, and protection from violence. Young (2018), Altman & Stigter (2015) allude to the safety aspect of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy: In the context of PID, designers can meet these needs by creating safe and inclusive public spaces, implementing crime prevention strategies, and fostering social cohesion within communities.

The fourth level of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy relates to self-esteem needs such as self-esteem, approval, and fulfilment. In the context of PID, designers help meet these needs by involving community members in the design process, allowing them to contribute their knowledge and skills, and recognizing their cultural identities and traditions. This tier links back to the social construction theme in Kim's conceptual taxonomy (Karim 2018).

The apex of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy is self-actualization, which refers to maximising a person's potential and personal growth. Davis (2016: 23-25) mentions that designers contribute to self-actualization of the community by providing members with opportunities to develop talents, pursue creative endeavours, and participate in lifelong learning, relating back to the collective capacities theme in Kim's conceptual taxonomy (in Karim 2018).

Design Thinking and Empathetic design

Utssav Gupta (2020) argues that *Design Thinking* is a human centred and a non-linear iterative process which relies on observing with empathy, using interviews to see issues from the perspective of the end user and co- designing solutions .

Empathy-focused design thinking is a powerful approach to PID that prioritises the needs and desires of marginalised communities. This human-centred design process empowers designers to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences, perspectives and challenges faced by the communities they serve and to create more impactful and sustainable solutions (Brown 2008).

Central to design thinking is the concept of empathy. Empathy is actively listening, observing, and connecting with community members in order to truly understand their lived experiences (Dorst 2011). Empathy allows designers to transcend assumptions and stereotypes and to create genuine connections with the people they design for. Immersion in the community allows the designer to gain insight and a nuanced understanding of the needs, wants and aspirations of her members in the community (Sanders & Stappers 2012). Empathy is especially important in PID as it helps designers challenge power relations and address systemic inequalities faced by marginalised communities (Altman & Stigter 2015).

Altman and Stigter (2015), Anderson (2018), Gupta (2020) state that by putting yourself in the shoes of the community, designers can better understand the challenges they face every day and collaborate to create contextually meaningful solutions. This process not only ensures that solutions are more effective, but also promotes creating a sense of ownership within the community (Anderson 2018). This collaborative approach facilitates inclusive decision-making, builds trust, and enables communities to actively participate in shaping their environment (Karim 2018).

According to Hamdi's (2017) lecture on *Deciding Urban Intervention* at the Chalmers University of Technology, empathy arrives with engagement and empathy not only leads to more effective and meaningful design, it also strengthens community and fosters a sense of ownership and agency. By putting empathy at the heart of PID, the designer is able to make a positive impact on society and contribute to the well-being and empowerment of marginalised communities.

Participation and Collective Capability
Kim (in Karim 2018) defines *Participatory Action Research (PAR)* and practice as involving a collaborative and iterative process of research, design, and action. It emphasises the importance of involving communities in defining research questions, collecting data, and co-designing interventions. Participatory action research and practice align with the collaborative category in Kim's taxonomy. By combining research and design methods, designers can develop context-specific and culturally sensitive solutions that address community needs and aspirations. PAR and *Design Thinking* (Arnold 1959) are similar in terms of what they are trying to achieve and both are human-centred approaches to design.

Collective capability emphasises the empowerment of communities and their capacity to actively participate in the design process. It recognizes that communities possess unique knowledge, skills, and experiences that should inform design interventions. *Collective*

capability aligns with the collaborative category in Kim's taxonomy. Designers practising *collective capability* engage with communities as active stakeholders, facilitating participatory decision-making, and enabling community-led solutions (Karim 2018).

Participation is core to PID. In Kim's (in Karim 2018) conceptual taxonomy participation is indicated as one of the key principles of the PID. Defining it as *Participatory Action Research and practice* indicates a collaborative and iterative process of research, design, and action. It emphasises the importance of involving communities in defining research questions, collecting data, and co-designing interventions. Participatory action research and practice align with the collaborative category in Kim's taxonomy. By combining research and design methods, designers can develop context-specific and culturally sensitive solutions that address community needs and aspirations (Karim 2018).

For Hamdi (2010) incorporating participation makes placemaking efforts more inclusive and more responsive to the needs of real communities. Hamdi (2010) believes that spatial design is not only about physical improvements, but also about promoting a sense of ownership and belonging among community members .

Reason and Bradbury (2008) and Hamdi (2010) share a common view on the transformative potential of PAR in addressing power imbalances, promoting social justice and generating knowledge that is both academically rigorous and practically relevant. Hamdi (2010) further states that for place-making and design to be effective, participation is very important, as important as having a strong and integrated community. PAR encourages active participation, dialogue, and reflection, enabling communities to drive the research process and contribute to positive social outcomes (Karim 2018).

There are many tools to measure participation: Arnstein's Participation Ladder is one such tool. It is a framework that can be applied in the context of PID to understand levels of community engagement and participation in the decision-making process. Developed by Shelley R. Arnstein in 1969, the ladder consists of eight steps representing varying levels of civic power and participation (Arnstein 1969).

At the bottom of the ladder is the first row, which represents alibi and non-participation. Tokenism is understood to mean a situation in which the community is only informed or consulted without substantive influence on decisions affecting the community. Nonparticipation, on the other hand, means excluding the community entirely from the decision-making process (Arnstein 1969).

As you climb the ladder, the middle steps represent different levels of civic participation. These include levels such as appeasement, which consults the community and addresses concerns, but leaves decision-making authority with external bodies. Partnerships and delegation of authority are higher up the ladder and require more collaborative processes and shared decision-making among communities and other stakeholders (Arnstein 1969).

The top of the ladder represents the highest level of community participation and power. These include civic control and civic power, where communities have great influence over decision-making processes and powers in shaping policies and initiatives (Arnstein 1969).

By understanding where the community is situated on the ladder, the designer can identify areas for improvement and work towards achieving higher levels of community empowerment and participation in her PID initiative (Daly and Townsend 2015).

The ladders help eliminate power imbalances and inequalities by shifting the focus from symbolic participation to higher levels of civic control and power. This supports the principles of social equity and equity that underlie many PID initiatives (Arnstein 1969).

The Arnstein Participation Ladder (1969) is a valuable framework for shaping public good that can guide the evaluation and improvement of community engagement and participation. By understanding the different stages of the ladder and working to increase civic empowerment, designers and practitioners can truly meet the needs and desires of the communities PID projects serve. This ladder helps facilitate inclusive decision-making, strengthens communities and fosters a sense of ownership, ultimately leading to more effective and sustainable design outcomes.

The Right to the city, Informal sector and Public spaces
Luisa Bravo (2022) states that public spaces are common spaces that should be open, inclusive and democratically operated . She also states public space is the cement of society that can contribute to progress mutual trust, cooperation and solidarity between individuals, groups and community.

The *Right to the City* first originates from French philosopher Henri Lefebvre (1968). This remains relevant to contemporary complexity in urban scenarios of socio-spatial discrimination and exclusion, inequality and disregard for civic rights due to power dynamics across the globe (Bravo 2022).

The *Right to the City* encompasses the rights of all individuals, particularly marginalised and vulnerable populations, to actively shape and participate in the development of their cities (Mitchell 2003). It recognizes that cities are not limited to physical spaces but also complex social, political, and economic entities that should be inclusive and accessible to everyone (Elias 2020). This aligns with the *activist* category in Joonsung Kim's taxonomy (in Karim 2018), *Design for political activism* which seeks to challenge existing power structures, advocate for social justice, and promote equitable urban development.

Public spaces with cities are heterogeneous social areas that are generally accessible to all people(Low and Smith 2013).

Whyte (1980) and Don Mitchell (2003) share similar sentiments with Karim (2018) that public spaces support fundamental rights and serve as avenues for fostering social integration, economic opportunities, and cultural expression. Within the framework of the *Right to the City*, the focus is on reclaiming and redefining public spaces to ensure their inclusivity and functionality. They also express that well-designed public spaces can attract diverse users, foster social cohesion, and stimulate economic vitality, also placing importance on factors such as accessibility, safety, and amenities in creating vibrant public spaces that support a range of economic activities

The concept of the *informal economy* is relevant in understanding the economic activities within marginalised communities. The informal economy encompasses a range of unregulated and often marginalised economic activities, including street vending, informal markets, and small-scale entrepreneurship (Charmans, Petersen and Govender 2018).

Public spaces often serve as the backdrop for these informal economic activities, providing a space for individuals to sell goods, offer services, and engage in local trade. By recognizing and supporting the economic potential of public spaces within marginalised communities, designers and policymakers can contribute to inclusive urban development (Mitchell 2003) .

The creation of public spaces that are safe, accessible, and conducive to economic activities are an important aspect when addressing the right to the city. Design interventions that provide infrastructure, amenities, and supportive policies can empower marginalised communities to participate in the formal and informal economies, improve their economic conditions, and enhance their quality of life.

The *Right to the City* and the role of public spaces in promoting economic activities within marginalised communities are interconnected concepts within the framework of PID. By advocating for inclusive urban development and creating supportive public spaces, designers can contribute to social and economic empowerment.

Conclusion to literature review

For a country so rich in inequality and so many unmet social needs one would assume that PID would be the popular route for spatial designers to embark on. PID has illustrated its relevance in South Africa and its potential is strongly highlighted in the literature.

The literature covers a lot of ground on what PID and how it can positively affect the South Africa context, but sadly falls short on how we implement it . As mentioned earlier, townships in the South African context operated significantly differently from other urban areas, so a more tailored approach to the PID discourse should be applied and explored.

By exploring the participation process in the selected architectural inventions, we identify best practices to PID that help guide in implementing the nine categories of Kim's taxonomy (in Karim 2018) and have a much more successful social impact.

One can argue PID should become an essential part of South Africa's policy framework, alongside the existing human centred policies like the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) act of 2003 and The Batho Pele principles of 1997.

Next steps in PID research will explore what lessons and best practices can we learn from the existing PID in the townships to help with future PID projects. In addition, research should explore how PID can contribute to South Africa's policy framework and urban planning process, making it an integral part of the country's development agenda.

Methodology

Research Design and Paradigm

This research employs a comparative case study design within a pragmatic paradigm to explore the lessons and best practices derived from the experiences of Guga S'Thebe and Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) initiatives in South Africa. The comparative case study design allows for a detailed examination of each initiative's context, interventions, and outcomes, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of their approaches to PID (Creswell and Creswell 2018).

The pragmatic paradigm was selected as it acknowledges the importance of practical application and seeks to generate knowledge that can inform real-world interventions (Creswell and Creswell 2018).

Target Group and sampling

This research employed a snowball sampling methodology to collect data.
According to Atkinson and Flint (2001) the snowball sampling process begins by identifying a few initial participants with relevant knowledge related to the research topic, these participants are referred to as *seeds.*

Atkinson and Flint (2001) further elaborate that these *seeds* are selected on the basis on their ability to provide rich and diverse perspective on the research topic, involvement and access to the studied population:

> *The snowball sampling process typically begins with the identification of a few initial participants, often referred to as 'seeds,' who are known to possess relevant knowledge or experiences related to the research topic and these seeds are selected based on their expertise, access to the target population, or their ability to provide rich and diverse perspectives on the research subject* (Atkinson and Flint, 2001)*.*

The s*eed* for this research was the architect Carin Smuts, who gave access to the facility where I was able to speak to the local artists, residents, tour guides and employees of the Guga S'Thebe cultural and arts centre.

Claire De Truvou, a fellow researcher familiar with Khayalisha and the VPUU was another *seed* to the research as she played the role of tour guide and shared her acquired knowledge on the VPUU projects. She also organised a meeting with the VPUU architect who worked on the project.

Data Collection
The primary data for this research was collected through on-site semi-structured interviews, images, and observational sketches.

On-site semi- structured interviews were conducted with the *seeds* involved in the Guga S'Thebe cultural & arts centre and VPUU initiatives. These these semi- structured interviews provided in-depth insights into the experiences, challenges, and outcomes of the initiatives, allowing for a rich understanding of their PID interventions (Merriam 2009).

The secondary data for this research was collected through desktop studies of literature about the two case studies, as well as academic texts prepared by previous Honours students in the PID research study group in the department of Architecture at the University of Pretoria.

On-site observations were used to complement the interview data and provide visual evidence of the physical transformations and community engagement associated with Guga S'Thebe and VPUU. Photographs and visual documentation of the physical spaces, activities, and community interactions enhanced the research findings and provided a more holistic understanding of the interventions.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a questionnaire that was produced using the PID taxonomy as developed by Kim (in Karim 2018). Using nine guiding questions that could be used for the target group which was co-developed between the research team and the research leader using Miro as a collaboration tool. The nine guiding questions were developed for consistency amongst the research team, asking questions which don't contribute to the research and getting more nuanced responses.

Audio recordings were taken during the interviews after verbal consent was granted. Consent was requested again at the beginning of the interview. The recordings were used to capture key moments that the author may have forgotten and reverted back to during the data analysis phase of the process.

The audio recordings were later transcribed using AI and refined by manual transcription.

Data Analysis

The data collected through interviews, images, and observations was analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a flexible and widely used qualitative method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns and themes within data (Braun and Clarke 2006). The analysis process involved several stages:

Stage 1: Primary data, which is the semi structured interviews, was analysed using the method of recursive abstraction (Polkinghorne & Arnold 2014). Recursive abstraction is a qualitative data analysis method that takes responses from the interview and places them into a table. The responses are then paraphrased, coding and organising them according to the research themes.

Stage 2: For the secondary data analysis, a thematic analysis approach was employed (Kiger and Varpio 2020:1-3). Thematic analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data by searching across the dataset to identify and analyse repeated patterns and themes

Stage 3: The data analysis follows Kiger and Vaperio (2020) six step guide to thematic data analysis .

Step 1 - Data Familiarisation: The collected data, including interview transcripts, images, and observational notes, were carefully reviewed to become familiar with the content and to gain a holistic understanding of the cases.

Step 2 -Initial Coding: Initial codes were generated by systematically identifying significant concepts, themes, and patterns within the data. This process involved assigning labels or codes to meaningful segments of data. This coding method was done by hand, writing on paper and transferring it to *Google Sheets^{TM}*.

Step 3 - Theme Development: The initial codes were organised into broader themes and sub-themes through an iterative process of comparison, grouping, and refining. This process involved constant comparison between cases, literature and revisiting the data to ensure the themes accurately represent the data.

Step 4 - Review: The identified themes were reviewed and validated by cross-referencing with the secondary data, ensuring that they captured the key aspects of the Guga S'Thebe and VPUU initiatives. This process enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, specially in thematic analysis by the sources should be dependable, confirmable when searched again and transferable, which means that studied is applicable within or out of context (Farnsworth 2023).

Step 5 -Interpretation: The identified themes and sub-themes were interpreted to provide a deeper understanding of the lessons and best practices derived from the experiences of Guga S'Thebe and VPUU initiatives. This process involved analysing the connections and relationships between the themes, examining their implications, and drawing insightful conclusions (Braun and Clarke 2006). The interpretation was guided by relevant literature and theoretical frameworks, enabling a broader context for understanding the significance of the findings.

Step 6: Reporting: The final step involved organising and presenting the findings in a coherent and meaningful manner. The themes and sub-themes were described and supported by relevant quotes, images, and observational data to illustrate the lessons and best practices derived from the experiences of Guga S'Thebe and the VPUU.

According to Kiger and Vaperio (2020) the thematic analysis approach is a flexible method for analysing qualitative data and allows for a comprehensive exploration of the experiences and behavioural outcomes of the two case studies, enabling a nuanced understanding of the lessons and best practices in PID interventions. It provided a structured and systematic approach to analyse the rich qualitative data collected through interviews, images, and observations.

Ethics
The research study was conducted with ethical clearance granted by the University of Pretoria EBIT faculty (reference number EBIT/15/2022). During the interview process, the

aim of the research was explained and how participants would contribute. Each participant signed the consent form and gave verbal consent on audio recording.

Results and Discussion

The Analysed Data which consists of the following:

Data Set		Tools
Primary	Interview with Carin Smuts	Questionnaire
	Interview with VPUU Architect (Jackie James)	Questionnaire
	Interview Langa Resident	Questionnaire
	Interview Mosaic Artists	Questionnaire
	Interview with Tour Guide	Questionnaire
	Interview with Art seller	Questionnaire
Secondary	Public opinions	Facebook review and google review
	Reports	Websites Articles
	Literature	Peer-reviewed scholarly papers
	Audio Recording of Interview with Buhle Sithel by Aa'shiah Begg (2022)	Audio recording
	Interview with Bonga Zamisa by Aa'shiah Begg (2022)	Google meet video recording
	Interview with Klitzner, T Landscape Architect (2022).	Email response
	Interview with Irving, N . Architect at CCNI by Aa'shiah Begg (2022)	Email response

Table 1 : Table of Data Set and used tool by Author(2023)

On a surface level, learning from the complexity of these two case studies, we see that these best practices and lessons, future PID projects in townships can better navigate the complexities of community development, create positive social impact, and contribute to the equitable transformation of urban environments. Embracing community engagement, empathy, collaboration, and context-specific design strategies will pave the way for more inclusive, sustainable, and empowering interventions in marginalised communities.

The few key elements we can take from Guga S'Thebe and the VPUU initiatives which draw lessons from the PID discourse can be implemented in future PID projects.

From the data that was analysed, it was identified that community engagement and co-creation are the cornerstone of both Guga S'Thebe and VPUU . They prioritise community engagement and co-creation in their design processes and demonstrate the value of participatory decision-making processes. They involve community members as decision-makers, ensuring that the design solutions are contextually relevant and reflective of community needs.

According to what was found in the research, when dealing with marginalised communities *it is important to directly ask what the community needs instead of assuming their needs* (Smuts 2023).

By placing emphasis on having collaborative processes and fostering partnerships with the community, multiple stakeholders like the government, non-profit organisations, grassroots/community based organisations, academia and the private sector both locally and internationally, can pool mass resources and knowledge for the betterment of the impacted society (Louw 2021;184). We find that both the VPUU and Guga S'Thebe have developed extensive partnerships networks that contribute to the success of the projects.

Exploring the data found of the Guga S'Thebe cultural centre, important points arose when analysing the data.

Frey (2016;93) writes *Guga S'thebe Kudala Usophulela which ïs a isixhosa saying means ageing serving platter for its enduring friendly services*. This statement is the key concept that links the building to the community as it means that its purpose is to serve everyone that visits the place and its community.This statement is significant as it was a prevalent theme that arose in the research findings.

Smuts (2023), O'Connor (2017) and Nogamtshi (2023) refer to *Guga S'Thebe as the old serving platter for which all can be served.* According to Smuts (2023) this statement embodies the genius loci of the place and Madokazi(2023) also mentions that this statement *symbolises the sense of community and their partners*.

Madokazi (2023) notes that *this platter means that an individual brings what they have and shares it with everyone for the greater good of the community*.

Carin Smuts (2023) stated that they used cardboard models and hand drawings as a tool of engagement during their workshops, firstly to bridge the gap of knowledge and language barriers.

Smuts (2010) defines the Guga S'Thebe building as a post- apartheid building as it directly deals with the needs of the community and is context specific.

An iterative process was undertaken in the design of the centre as the community and the architect had to all agree on the best way to represent the building with the older generation looking to embody the cultural roots through a rondavel and the youth desiring a more contemporary look to symbolise the shift of the times (Smuts 2010).

Smuts (2023) mentioned that community engagement took two years to conduct as she had to navigate many diverse and contrasting voices and had to operate on a pro-bono basis to achieve the building we see today.

Figure 1: Partnership Board of the New Guga S'Thebe Theatre (Source Author : 2023)

Guga S'Thebe theatre was constructed in 2015 and is relevant as an example that highlights several categories in Kim's Taxonomy(in Karim 2018) which are Collective capability , Pro bono Design services, Participation and Design for Political activism.

According to Louw (2021:184) and Smuts (2023) the theatre was an initial partnership between CS Studio Architects and Design.Develop.Build, a collaboration of RWTH Aachen, PBSA Düsseldorf, Georgia Tech, and University of Cape town Architecture department. The

project was funded by the AIT which is a German architecture magazine and by Kristina Bacht (Louw 2021:184).

Louw (2021:184) mentions that AIT was the initiator of the project as the original intention was to fund and build a new orphanage in Cape Town but the city suggested building a 200 seater theatre instead for the community of Langa. This significant project follows into the domain of a Pro Bono design service in Kim's (In Karim 2018:343) taxonomy.

Figure 2: The theatre from the square (Source Author: 2023)

Figure 3: the site plan of new theatre (Source Louw 2021:184)

Design, Develop, Build is a program offered at the school of architecture in Georgia Institute of Technology, basing its pedagogy in collaboration with local communities (Georgia Tech 2023). The program describes its process as an exchange of knowledge between the students and the local community during the design and construction phase of the project, which is led by the students (Architizer 2023) . The Participatory Action Research (PAR) theme in Kim's taxonomy (in Karim 2018) is explored through this design process as the program integrates design, research and implementation (Georgia Tech 2023) as both the students and the local community try to understand the context-specific problems and promote social change in the process (Architizer 2023).

The local mosaic artist Mdakazi (2023) and local tour guide Meji(2023) show their excitement on being involved in the construction of the theatre, also mentioning that they were not involved in the design process but the implementation of the project.

Carin Smuts from CS architects studio played the role of liaison with the community and the local municipality according Louw (2021;184). Design Build Develop utilised her knowledge and experience as a gateway to the community. As the Design Develop Build collaboration finished the job, Carin Smuts remained involved, monitoring and evaluating the project, long past project completion (Louw 2021).

In September 2020 parts of the theatre burnt down (UCT 2022). Community engagement and participation never stopped, as UCT and Carin Smuts came together to rebuild the facility (UCT 2022). Workshops were held with the community in redesigning sound absorbers and light diffusers for the theatre. Local crafters taught the students how to make panels using recycled materials, the youth group of Macassar made the light diffusers and local welders welded the frames for those diffusers (UCT 2022).

Some townships may lack local organisations, community leaders, or skilled professionals to support and sustain PID projects. An important lesson to take here is that building local capacity and empowering community members to take ownership of interventions is crucial for long-term success.

This process confirms the importance of the participation and partnership in the Guga S'Thebe project and in PID projects both on a local and global scale. The research shows that the role of the architect may not end when the date of project completion is achieved. From looking at Carin Smuts' involvement with the Guga S'Thebe centre, we can derive that a PID project may result in a lifelong process constantly adjusting to the times.

Guga S'Thebe and VPUU demonstrate the value of participatory decision-making processes. Engaging community members in decision-making builds trust, fosters a sense of ownership, and ensures that interventions align with community priorities. Future PID projects should incorporate mechanisms for inclusive decision-making and avoid tokenism

According to the VPUU (2017) its success *is highly dependent on establishing strategic partnerships that play an important role throughout the process. These partnerships bring together a variety of stakeholders including communities, local governments, local governments, local NGOs, civil society organisations and the private sector.*

Through these collaborations, VPUU promotes a holistic approach to community development.A central aspect of the VPUU methodology is the formation and strengthening of representative leadership groups within the local community (VPUU 2023). In this way, the VPUU ensures that the decision-making process is inclusive and that residents have a real say in shaping initiatives and projects that directly affect their lives.

VPUU's commitment to fostering these partnerships and strengthening community leadership is an example of its commitment to sustainable community-led development.

By bringing together various stakeholders and involving local residents in the decision-making process, VPUU creates powerful synergies and paves the way for lasting positive change and transformation in the region.

Khause (2021) writes that the VPUU uses the participatory research model which features strategy of prevention, cohesion, protection and evidence research. Through engagement they are able to identify danger spots in the township and use that as the building blocks for their projects.

Klitzner (2022) confirms this engagement in that the community were involved in consultation on the design, pointing out design elements they felt would not work and were potentially unsafe.

VPUU aims to introduce programmes that are foreign to the townships as methods to empower the locals. This is seen with the mobile cinema: Sithel (2022) mentioned *that they partnered with the VPUU to make films accessible to the township audience. Accessibility becomes important to the development of the township.*

The work-live units on Harare square are one of the PID initiatives by the VPUU that present a primary example of what Faller (2017) claims as a success, as it aims to break the mono-functional nature of the township which is primarily residential. According to Frehrking(2018) work-live units encourage the integration of residential and income-generating spaces. The intention is to develop a series of such buildings along prominent pedestrian walkways, urban squares, and near transportation hubs. In the typical work-live unit, the ground floor serves as a space for generating income through various activities such as shops, offices or workshops, while the upper floor consists of a living space intended for the business owner's occupancy.

Dealing with the history of spatial segregation and historic injustices is a crucial aspect of PID interventions in South Africa. The VPUU's approach to violence and crime prevention through urban upgrading is particularly relevant in communities affected by spatial segregation (Faller 2017). By addressing the historical context and the specific needs of marginalised communities, PID interventions can be tailored to address the root causes of social issues and promote inclusivity.

This approach aims to diversify the functions within Khayelitsha. By introducing income-generating opportunities, local residents can benefit from additional sources of income. Furthermore, having business owners live in close proximity to their workplaces fosters a sense of ownership and encourages investment in the local community. Additionally, the presence of residents in the upper floors of these units contributes to passive surveillance, enhancing the overall safety and security of the public environment (Frehrking 2018).

However, the new development provides lockable units at the ground floor level, accommodating businesses while offering independent access to residential accommodations on the first floor. The balconies of these units serve the essential purpose of providing shade and shelter for the entrances to the shops below (Frehrking 2018).
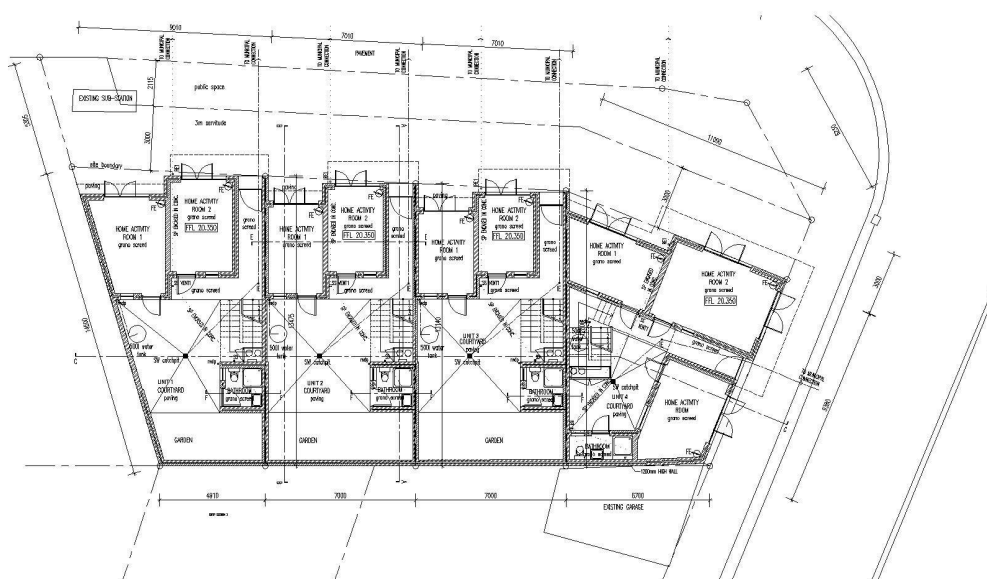
Figure 4: Image the ground floor plan of the live-work units, with the business interface at the ground level (Frehrking 2018).
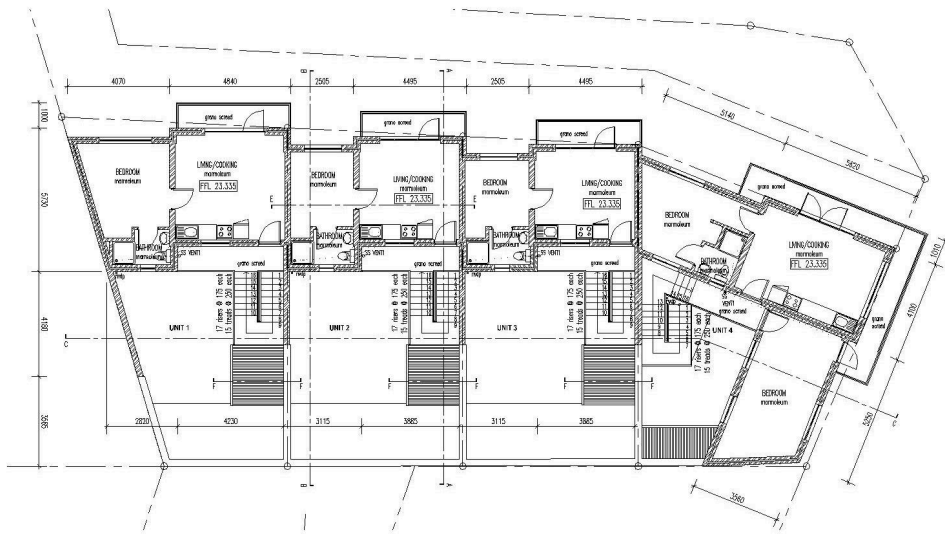

Figure 5: Plan of the 1st floor living space(Frehrking 2018)

Figure 6: Image of the current state of Live-Work units (Source: Author 2023)

Looking at the current state of the live-work units, they appear to be well maintained facilities, and are operating as intended. VPUU (2017) aims to create a sense of ownership, from observation this might be the case specially near Harare Square.

From on-site observations we see the decay of most of the VPUU projects in Khayelitsha. Jackie James (2023) mentioned that due to an unclear sense of ownership of the facilities and the lack of a long -term maintenance plan, those buildings are in a current state of disrepair.

Figure 7: VPUU sports field (Source : Author 2023)

Figure 8: Damaged and vandalised VPPU building (Source: Author 2023)

According the 2017/2018 annual review of RSEP/VPUU (RSEP VPUU 2018) we identified that the VPUU initiative falls under a larger government program which is Regional Socio-economic program (RSEF) / VPUU program under the department of environmental affairs and development planning.

The RSEF is intended to promote regional socio-economic development   through transformative means and partnership, and stands on the principle of a *whole of society* approach(RSEF/VPUU 2018).

James (2023) mentioned that the VPUU has expanded into a larger network which passes the borders of the city of Cape Town. We see that two new municipalities have been added to the VPUU program: Theewaterskloof Local municipality: Villersdorp and Drakenstein Municipality: Paarl East.

Looking at the decay of existing VPUU projects, one may question if the expansion of the VPUU was too soon? It's true that VPUU is impactful in other locations as well as confirmed by Zamisa (2022). Sithel (2022) and Williams (2017) highlight the amazing work done by the VPUU but it is scary to think that all those new initiatives end up like the image in figure 8.

VPUU showcased a strong emphasis on empathy and a human-centred approach to design. Understanding the lived experiences, challenges, and aspirations of community members is essential for developing effective and responsive solutions. Future PID projects should prioritise empathy and actively listen to the voices of those they aim to serve.

In the VPUU a manual for safety as a public good (VPUU 2017) states for a human centred / human development it is essential that one move away from a top-down approach and move towards a partner, so that one can have a sense of empathy for those they design for. Keeping in mind that we design for people not for things, aiming to address all human needs and that problems are isolated.

This approach fits into the PID taxonomy and PID discourse overall as we can see how Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of needs and Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation can be utilised as a design tool.

There are political and bureaucratic challenges that townships may face, such as bureaucratic red tape, political interference, or corruption, which can impede the implementation of design projects or take away core principles. Smuts (2023) and James (2023) both mentioned the importance of political will and political timing of a PID project as something that may be a big stumbling block in the execution of a project. Smuts (2014) mentions that the Langa development forum has identified land next to the politically driven and historical site where the *pass* burning protest happened. This was significant at the time and during that transitional period of 1994 , the government was willing to support the initiative (Smuts 2023). Designers alongside the community must navigate these challenges to ensure the successful execution of their interventions.

Former content developer and executive support at the VPUU(Faller 2017) argues that with historic and spatial segregation being such a big issue in Cape Town and South Africa at large, VPUU's take on violence and crime prevention through urban upgrading is very relevant in our communities.

Township areas have a history of marginalisation, apartheid policies, and social inequalities. Designers must be sensitive to this historical context and avoid perpetuating existing injustices in their interventions.

VPUU recognizes that creating safe environments is essential for fostering community well-being and social cohesion. The initiative adopts a multidimensional approach to address

the underlying causes of violence and social exclusion by integrating physical, social, and economic interventions (VPUU 2023). By improving the physical infrastructure of neighbourhoods, such as upgrading public spaces and enhancing lighting, VPUU aims to reduce opportunities for criminal activities and enhance community safety (Todes 2018).

Cassidy (2015) s*tates creating an environment requires intersectoral cooperation across the whole of society including roleplayers in the public health, criminal justice, educational and social development sectors, and the active participation and partnership of citizens and civil society more broadly.* Which again alludes to the back to theme of engagement in the discourse

Both the VPUU and the Guga S'Thebe emphasise the importance of creating safety in the township. Carin Smuts (2023) suggests that Guga S'Thebe is the safest place in all of Langa.

Andretta (2023) shares the same sentiments regarding the safety of Guga S'Thebe, but expresses sadness at the poverty levels in the township, despite being hopeful for its future development.Subhan (2023) also recommends that people should visit the facility as it is very rich in cultural history although one should not venture there by themselves.

The VPUU is an organisation that strives to create safe nodes in township neighbourhoods (VPUU 2023). Sithel (2022) confirms that the VPUU facilities are safe for children to use, and Tamsanqa (2018) and Williams (2017) state that Villiersdrop has benefitted from the projects brought to them.

Some *Facebook^TM* reviews of the VPUU claim that the VPUU is visible in the local landscape of Khayelitsha (Kula 2019), highlighting aspects of tangibility. Tamsanqa (2018) shares the same sentiment as he mentions that the initiatives of the VPUU such as the community urban gardens, built sports facilities which provide safe locations for children to play and the neighbourhood watch create a sense of safety with the community.

Carin Smuts (2023) mentioned that it is difficult to measure the success of PID projects by looking at how it has empowered and equipped the community because we don't consider time as a measure. People involved in the Guga S'Thebe Cultural and arts centre in 1998 (25 years ago) , might no longer be alive to reap the benefits.

Many seem to enjoy the Guga S'Thebe art and cultural centre, something which is evident in the *Google reviews^TM* of the place, Van Grootel (2018) saying that:
> *Great place to see how the township's are working hard to eliminate the disadvantages they have experienced due to the apartheid. Amazing people who will love to tell you about what they are doing now and what happened during the apartheid.*

Whilst others note that the potential of the establishment has not achieved its intended purpose or full purpose, due the the facility not giving opportunities (Mbizela 2022):
> *Whoever is currently managing this place lacks the vision.There are many creatives in Langa who could spark up this place given the opportunity to showcase their talent to*

ensure that Guga S'Thebe revives the once good old days. Currently, I don't believe the centre is serving its full purpose.

The research shows that they are contrasting voices in a PID project, as PID prides itself with hearing as many diverse voices and strives for inclusiveness. The research has shown that there will be people that are excluded with any PID project. So a designer should be very cognitive on who is included and who is deliberately excluded. There is room for further investigation on the effects of time on a PID project and shift of inclusion.

Townships may have diverse and fragmented communities with various cultural, social, and economic backgrounds. As seen in the *Google* ™ reviews, while some have positive opinions and others are more negative about the initiative as people have different needs and time is an important fact to measure in any PID project. Smuts (2023) mentioned that we never really measure the success of the PID project based on how it empowered the community, as time is very relative.

Engaging and involving all stakeholders can be challenging, and conflicts may arise between different interest groups. Designers must approach interventions with cultural sensitivity and involve the community in decision-making to ensure cultural relevance.

Understanding the specific context and unique challenges of each township is crucial for successful PID projects. Guga S'Thebe and VPUU tailor their interventions to suit the cultural, social, and economic characteristics of the communities they serve. Future PID projects should conduct thorough context analysis to inform design strategies that are culturally sensitive and relevant.

Both initiatives knowledge exchange and collective capability, empowering community members to actively participate in and lead development initiatives. Future PID projects should invest in building local capacity, ensuring that communities are equipped to sustain and maintain the projects in the long run.

Creating safe environments: Guga S'Thebe and VPUU recognize the importance of creating safe environments within townships. Safety concerns, such as crime and violence, are prevalent in many marginalised communities. Both initiatives implement design strategies that address safety issues, such as improved lighting, clear sightlines, and crime prevention through environmental design principles.

Future PID projects should prioritise safety considerations in their design interventions, aiming to create environments that are secure, welcoming, and free from violence. By enhancing safety, designers can contribute to the overall well-being and sense of security of community members, encouraging greater use and enjoyment of public spaces.

By incorporating the concept of creating safe environments, future PID projects can contribute to reducing crime rates, enhancing community cohesion, and fostering a greater sense of ownership and pride within the community. Prioritising safety aligns with the broader goal of creating inclusive, resilient, and thriving neighbourhoods within townships.

Long-term sustainability of Guga S'Thebe and VPUU prioritise long-term sustainability by considering the economic, social, and environmental factors that impact the success of their interventions.

Smut (2023) mentioned that by simplifying the design so that the layman can understand is a very important aspect of both Guga S'Thebe buildings , using easily accessible material that the community can easily assist in sustainability of the project. Smuts (2023) also stated that a sustainable building that wants and identifies with. VPUU (2017) says Sustainability is achieved when a development becomes evident that individuals gain enough empowerment to achieve self-sufficiency. That is when a community can handle challenges, advocate for their rights, showcase a sense of agency, and establish sustainable livelihoods to support their families, which enhance their living conditions.

Ensuring the sustainability of PID projects in townships is essential. Without long-term planning and support, interventions may become neglected or underutilised over time. Both initiatives recognize the importance of monitoring and evaluating their projects to assess their impact and identify areas for improvement. As like the VPUU In figure 8 result in urban decay and possibly can kill the initiative.

Future PID projects should adopt a holistic approach to sustainability, considering the economic viability and social resilience of their interventions.

While the lessons and best practices from initiatives like Guga S'Thebe and VPUU offer valuable insights for PID projects in townships, it's essential to recognize and address the limitations that may arise in the context of township areas.

While creating safe environments is a best practice, addressing safety concerns in townships may be complex due to high crime rates and social tensions. Some findings show in the research that when creating safe nodes there is a possibility of displacing the crime then actually stopping it so design interventions must carefully consider security measures without creating a sense of exclusion or surveillance and plan for displacement.

As seen in the research, without the proper planning of the design phase, construction phase and maintenance phase, many PID projects lose their essence and no longer perform like they were intended to. Future PID projects should co- create and implement robust planning, monitoring and evaluation frameworks to measure outcomes and utilise the data for better human- centred and data-backed decisions. This process should be stretched outside the field of design but enter into the realm of policy makers and local authorities as this also has a major impact on the success of the PID project in the long run.

Access to comprehensive data and research on townships may be limited, making it challenging to understand the specific needs and dynamics of each community fully.

Conclusion

Valuable lessons and best practices can be gleaned from Guga S'Thebe and VPUU initiatives in South Africa, shaping future PID interventions in similar contexts.

In South African PID, a community-centered approach seeks to address marginalized communities' needs, but previous projects lack clear examples and best practices.

Research underscores the importance of community engagement in PID, as seen in Guga S'Thebe and VPUU initiatives. Prioritizing co-creation and co-implementation ensures active community involvement, achieved through workshops, focus groups, and consultations. Emphasizing participatory decision-making aligns with community-specific solutions, reflecting collective capability and PAR categories within the PID taxonomy, and Arnstein's ladder of participation.

Building robust partnerships with diverse stakeholders, particularly under collective capability, is crucial for comprehensive community interventions, necessitating network development for designers.

The PID project's location and an empathetic approach are critical, with context analysis and cultural sensitivity playing pivotal roles. These aspects fall under political activism and social construction within the PID taxonomy.

Safety considerations emerge as essential for PID project success, prompting crime prevention strategies through environmental design principles.

The role of architects extends beyond project completion, requiring ongoing community dialogue and adaptation to changing needs.

Implementing these recommendations can enhance the impact of PID projects across South African townships. Genuine community engagement, empathy, safety, and inclusivity are key to addressing marginalized communities' unmet needs.

Guga S'Thebe and VPUU exemplify PID's focus on serving marginalized communities, contributing to the discourse on post-apartheid architecture in South Africa.

These case study lessons provide a foundation for further research on township PID projects, acknowledging their uniqueness and the need for richer architectural interventions to expand the discourse.

(11577 WORDS)

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